

# Tarkiln opens to a crowd

## Restored twin schoolhouse can be rented as a community center

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The Tarkiln Community Center opened to the public on Saturday, and if the crowd was any indication, Duxbury residents are happy to see the former school being used once more.

Residents were invited to browse through both rooms of the building and a connecting hallway. The building, built

in 1871, was redone as part of Community Preservation Act project, although much of the work was completed by volunteers, local contractors and businessmen who donated their time or worked for less than their usual rate, and town employees.

"The fabric of this community is its volunteerism," said Town Manager Richard

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**GRAND OPENING:** Jack Williams, who has served as the Tarkiln building's caretaker for many years, cuts a ribbon at the former schoolhouse's grand reopening Saturday afternoon as members of the Tarkiln Committee look on. For more photos, see page 17.

Photo by Justin Graeber

MacDonald. "In the last few years, all I hear [when meeting with fellow managers] is budget cuts and buildings closing ... but in Duxbury we're opening buildings."

He thanked a long list of people, but especially noted Jack Williams, who has looked after the building for decades, and has seen its fall and its rise.

"He had nothing but passion for this building and still does," MacDonald said.

Williams cut a ceremonial ribbon to close the ceremony on Saturday.

Interested guests took in the refinished rooms, which were decorated with art from local artists Bettina and Robert Lesieur, who loaned some of their artwork for the opening.

"This day is the culmination of a very long journey, riddled with setbacks and successes, that really has only been made possible by the hard work and cooperation of many, many people who care deeply about Tarkiln and who never gave up the dream that this building was worthy of being saved," said Susanna Sheehan, who has worked to restore the building for nearly 10 years. "What a roller coaster ride it's been, but throughout it all, the desire to save Tarkiln has burned brighter than the negative attitudes of the naysayers."

# Grand reopening for Tarkiln

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Sheehan thanked her husband, Emmett, a local businessman for donating so much of his own time helping to wrap up the project.

"Emmett gave so much of himself to this building, and I can't thank him enough," she said. "As my mother said recently, he put his heart and soul into Tarkiln."

She also thanked town officials, including DPW Director Peter Buttkus, Director of Inspectional Services Scott Lambiase and MacDonald.

"Instead of seeing Tarkiln as a thorn in his side, he embraced it and assisted us in

any way he could," she said of Buttkus.

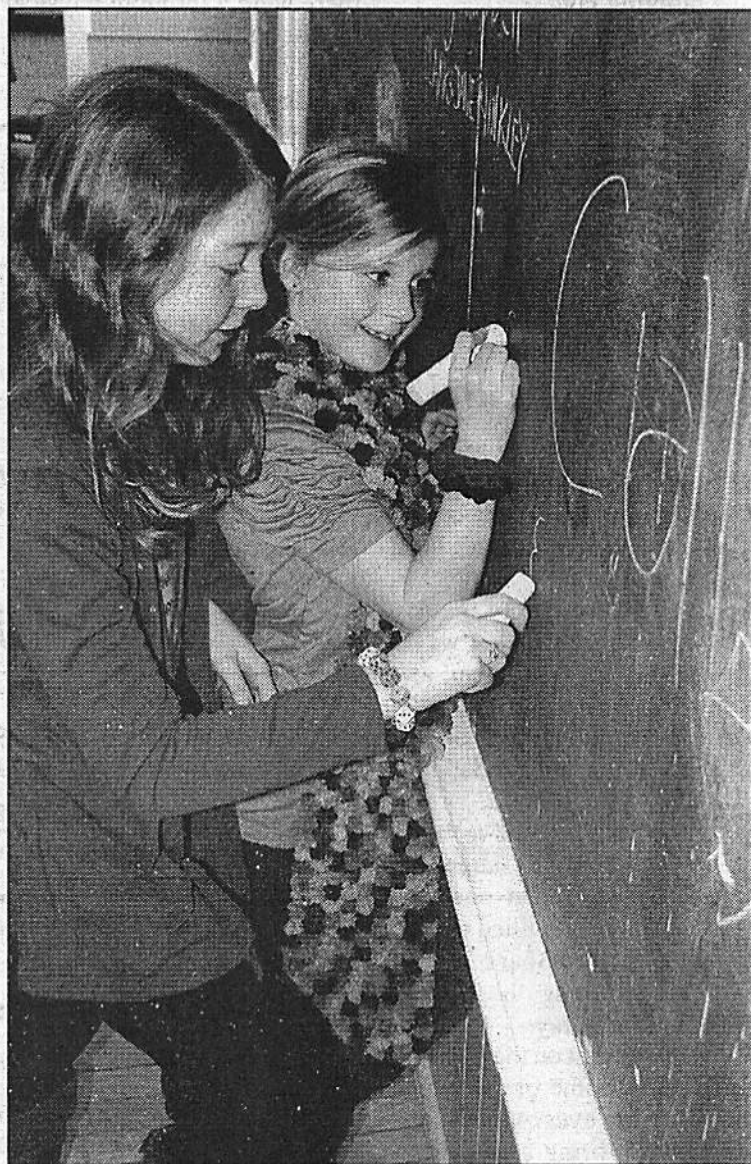
Tag Carpenter, chairman of the Tarkiln Committee, said that words didn't do the building justice.

"There is something about this place," he said. "There is a certain spirit to Tarkiln that draws people in."

Carpenter also warned that if people didn't maintain the building, it would fall into disrepair again.

"It needs to be paid attention to," he said.

"This was a place of learning," said Selecman Betsy Sullivan. "It had another lesson to teach us - we don't give up on our heritage ... this building has a lot more to give, a lot more to teach us."



Elizabeth Sheehan and Caroline Williams sign their names on the "Tarkiln Guestbook," slate chalkboards that were uncovered during the building's restoration.

Duxbury Historical Commission Chairman Norman Tucker, Terry Vose and R. T. Carpenter of the Tarkiln Committee place the CPA funding plaque at the Tarkiln Community Center in preparation for the opening celebration.

Photo courtesy of Judi Vose

